1829 Articles of the Covenant

PAPERS
OF
SHAKERS

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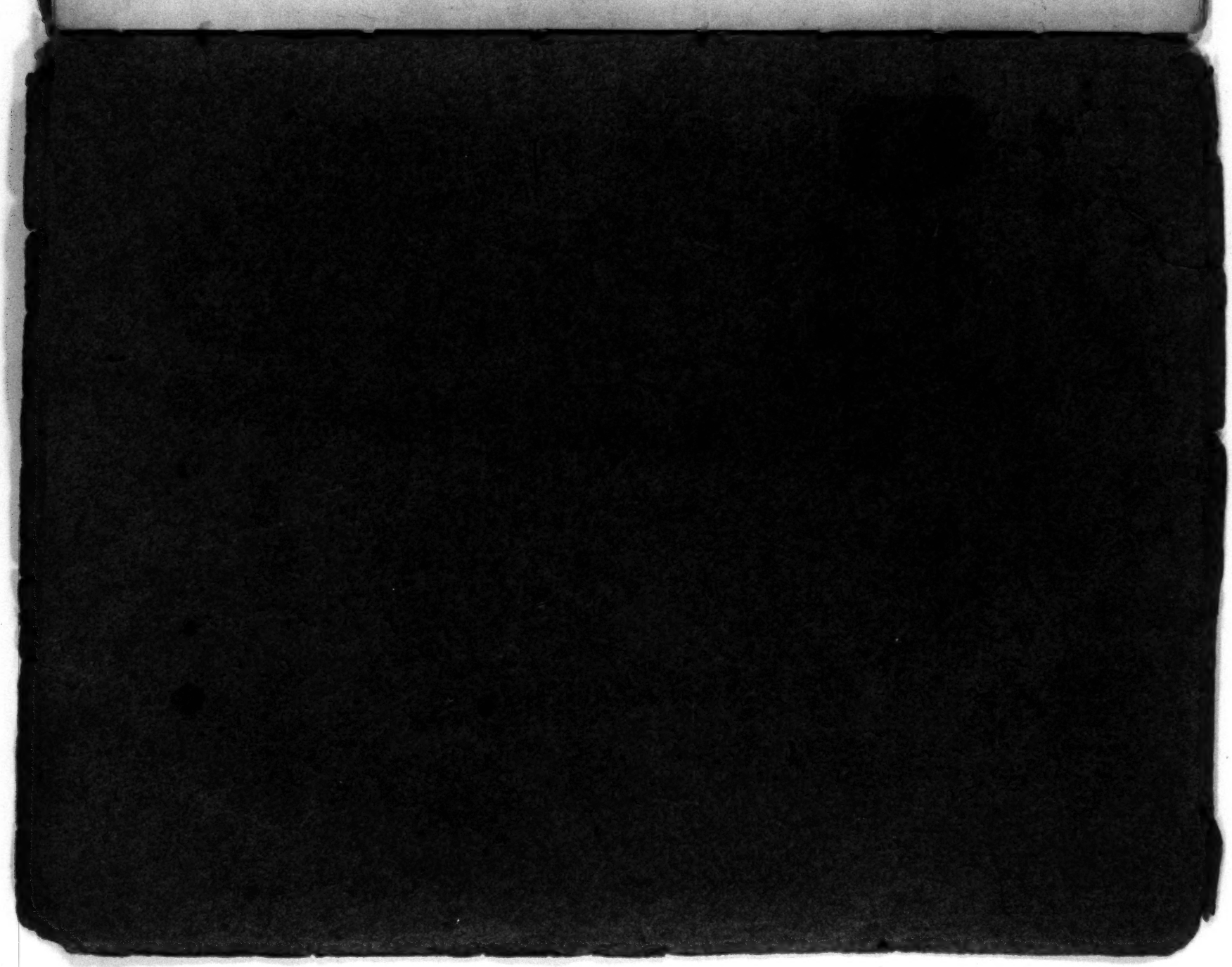
~~OHIO~~
~~Union Village~~
N.Y.
New Lebanon



[Ohio. Union Village.

But located under

N. Y. New Lebanon.]

Warren county State of Ohio.

Whereas we the subscribers denominated by each other Believers in Christ, having received the testimony of the gospel through the ministrations of the Church at New Lebanon in the township of Canaan, county of Columbia and state of New-York and believing according to the distinguishing faith of said Church, that Christ hath actually made his appearance the second time without sin unto salvation, and has begun to establish his kingdom of righteousness & peace on earth which is free to all people and will stand forever. And having taken sufficient time and precaution to prove our faith in the aforesaid testimony, & being fully satisfied that it is the faith of the only true gospel into which we have been called, and considering it to be our right and privilege under a free government to chuse that manner of life which we deem the most conducive to the happiness of ourselves and others; and believing that the order of the Church founded on the principles of a consecrated interest for the mutual and equal support of all the members and for other charitable purposes, is the best calculated to promote individual and general happiness; Therefore in pursuance of the light and liberty which we as a free people enjoy, we have renounced and abandoned every other plan of society, and adopted the well known principles and articles of compact transmitted to us from the church aforesaid, and we do hereby fully

and freely recognize, ratify, confirm and establish all the essential principles, rules, manners and customs of the church aforesaid as heretofore practised and herein revised and improved, in order to render the same more conformable to the present state of things among us, and better calculated to defend our rights before the civil tribunal of men; accordingly by mutual assent, consent and agreement we do make, ordain and declare the following articles to be kept and maintained as an abiding covenant by us and to stand as a lawful testimony in all cases of the nature, intent design and purpose of our social compact.

Article 1. We solemnly covenant and agree that as heretofore, so in future, we will support and maintain our union and relation to each other in subordination to the parent church at New Lebanon aforesaid, according to the faith and principles which we have received through the various labors of her ministers particularly of Elder David Darrow, & Eldress Ruth Farrington whom we acknowledge as beloved parents in the gospel & through whose joint ministrations the foundation of the present order of the church, in this place, was laid. That since the decease of the said David Darrow and Ruth Farrington, the ministration of the gifts of God and the spiritual protection of souls have rested with Solomon King and Rachel Johnson whom we acknowledge, love, and respect as our spiritual lead in the gospel, and that we consider them together with the ministers and elders of the church who act in union with them as

duly invested with authority to guide, teach and direct in the great concern of our spiritual travel and to advise and counsel in other matters of importance whether spiritual or temporal. To the said spiritual lead, therefore appertains the power to nominate and appoint to office, Ministers, elders, trustees and deacons, and to assign offices of care and trust to such brethren and sisters as they shall judge to be best qualified for the same; which nominations and appointments being communicated to the members concerned, & having received the free and mutual approbation of the church shall be thereby established and confirmed until altered or repealed by the same authority.

Article II. We further covenant and agree that all consecrated property that has been or may be devoted or given up for the benefit and support of the church, or for other charitable uses be continued under the care and management of trustees, chosen as aforesaid by the ministry and elders and confirmed in office by the approbation of the church. That Peter Pease (under whose labors the temporal affairs of the church, here, were first brought into order) having resigned his trust to Nathan Sharp, leaving the said Nathan Sharp & Lewis Vallantine in care of the consecrated interest of the church. That for the further security and well ordering of temporal matters all vacancies that have happened or may hereafter happen in the trusteeship be filled up in due season, & other helps either of brethren or sisters added as may appear necessary all which additions or other arrangements respecting the trusteeship

shall be duly attested and entered on the records of the church, and the trustees thus appointed and approved shall be fully authorised & empowered to execute their respective duties as heretofore, or as may hereafter be directed by proper authority.

Article III. We further covenant and agree that the Ministry and elders are truly and properly the governors by whose authority the trustees hold lawful claim to all and singular the estate & interest dedicated, devoted and given up as aforesaid to the use and benefit of the church. That the estate and interest thus committed and confided to the care of the trustees shall be held by them in the capacity of trustees and shall be and remain forever inviolably under the care and oversight and at the disposal of the trusteeship of the church in a continual line of succession. And it shall also be the duty of the said trustees and their successors to make all just and lawful defence for the protection and security of the said consecrated interest and privileges of the church, and also to appropriate, use and improve the said interest for the benefit of the church, the relief of the poor and such other charitable purposes as the gospel may require or the proper authorities direct and not for any personal, private or selfish interest, object or purpose whatever.

Article IV. We further covenant and agree that all who are received as members of the church are to be of lawful age to chuse &

act for themselves and to offer themselves freely and voluntarily according to their own faith and desire, and such as have property and are free from debt or any just demand from those that are without are allowed according to their own faith to bring in, & devote to the use and benefit of the church all such property as they justly hold and have an indisputable right to as their lawful interest and the consecrated interest of the church thus formed and established by the free will offerings of individuals respectively shall be mutually enjoyed by the whole body equally as their sacred & covenanted right, that is each and every individual of or belonging to the church shall enjoy equal privileges in the use of all things pertaining to the church, without any difference being made on account of what any one brought in or may hereafter bring into the church, and further more it shall be the duty of all the members jointly & individually to occupy their time & talents to support and maintain the said interest of the church according to their several abilities & callings for the mutual benefit of the whole body. And for the confirmation of our part engagements we do solemnly & conscientiously dedicate, devote and give up ourselves and services with all our temporal interest to God & his church to be under the care of such ministers, elders, trustees or deacons as have been or may be appointed & established in office according to the first article of this covenant

Article V. As the sole object, purpose and design of our uniting in church relation, was, from the beginning, & still is

faithfully & honestly to improve the manifold gifts of God, both of of a spiritual and temporal nature for the mutual support, comfort and happiness of each other and such other pious and charitable purposes as the gospel may require; Therefore we do by this covenant solemnly and conscientiously, jointly and individually, for ourselves, our heirs and assigns promise and declare, that we will never hereafter, neither directly nor indirectly, make or require any account, of any interest, property labor or service which has been or may be devoted by us or either of us to the purposes aforesaid; nor bring any charge of debt or damage or hold any demand whatever against the church or any officer or member of the church or society on account of any property or service given, rendered, devoted or consecrated to the aforesaid sacred & charitable purposes. And moreover as it ever pertained to the church of Christ to decide & settle all causes, trials, claims, controversies, matters & things that may exist among or between the members, we do promise and agree to submit to and abide by the decision of the proper judges & officers of the church in all our future transactions and domestic concerns, & never to appeal to any civil tribunal for the decision of any cause matter or thing that has existed or may hereafter exist between us from the beginning of the world to the end of time.

Article VI We further covenant and agree that every person who shall after the date of this covenant be admitted into the church as a member thereof, shall previously in the

presence of two witnesses at least, read or hear distinctly read this covenant and shall acknowledge his or her full approbation of the same, then he or she may have full liberty to sign this covenant & be admitted to the equal privileges of membership, and the signatures thus added shall be duly attested and entered with their respective dates on the records of the church. Children who are under age cannot be admitted as church members to sign the covenant, Notwithstanding upon their own request and with the consent of their parents or guardians they may be taken under the care of the church and enjoy all the privileges of minors.

Article VII. We further covenant and agree that it shall be the duty of such of the trustees as may have the special oversight of the internal concerns of the church, to keep or cause to be kept in a book provided for the purpose a true copy of this covenant together with all other records and transactions of a public nature which may be necessary for the information & satisfaction of all concerned, and and for the security of the consecrated interest committed to their care.

In confirmation of all the aforesaid statements, promises & articles of agreement we have here unto subscribed our names in the presence of each other

The foregoing draft of the Church covenant was made at the East House by E.W. in the winter of 1829, in conformity to a draft of the N. Lebanon Cov.t now in the possession of Elder Archibald

Form of a Transfer

of

the mutual rights of possession title, use and enjoyment from the primary grantors and grantees of church property to their heirs and successors in the same faith.

THIS Indenture made this day of March, 1831. Between Malcham Worley, Francis Bedle, Amos Vallantine Joseph Stout Andrew Brown Betteshazzar Dragoo Jacob Holloway Samuel Holloway, David Shining, Stephen Shining Elijah Davis William Davis, Daniel Boyd, John Miller, Susanna Miller Sally Davis, Lydia Davis Mary Shining Hannah Holloway Betsy Holloway Martha Dragoo, Eunice Brown Sarah Sering Jenny McNemar & Rosalinda Watts, all of the county of Warren and state of Ohio of the first part, and William Sharp, Abner Bedle, Eli Houston James Smith Andrew C Houston Joseph C Worley Clark Vallantine, Daniel Davis John Gee. Nathan Sharp Henry Valentine, Thamar Johnson, William Runyon, William Davis Thomas Hunt, Ame Boyd Elizabeth Sharp, Eliza sharp, Nancy Millikin, Charlotte Morrel, Naomi Legier Anne Brownfield, Peggy knox, Caty Boyd Betsey Dickson Elizabeth Wait, Susanna Liddel Esther Davis and Hannah Valentine, the present Elders, Trustees & Deacons of the Church or United Society at Union Village in the county & state aforesaid of the second part. Whereas, by virtue

(other than is stipulated in the aforesaid covenants)
of and from all right & title in & to said premises & every part thereof
be forever barred by these presents. And the said parties of the first
part for themselves their heirs, executors & administrators do hereby
covenant grant & ~~[illegible]~~ agree to and with the said parties of the 2nd.
part that the said premises are not and shall not be charged or in-
cumbered by or with any act matter or thing done or caused to be done or
neglected to be done by them or by any other person or persons in their
name or behalf touching the premises aforesaid; but the said par-
ties of the second part the survivors of them their heirs assigns & successors
shall & may at all times, hereafter quietly & peaceably have, hold, poss-
enjoy use & improve for the purposes aforesaid all & singular the prems
is above mentioned purchased or conveyed as aforesaid to the use &
benefit of the Church or society aforesaid, according to the last mentioned
covenant aforesaid without let, suit, trouble hindrance molestation, interruption or
disturbance of the said parties of the first part their heirs executors adminis-
trators agents or assigns or of any person or persons whatever claiming
under them or either of them. In witness whereof.